

A called meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, was held in the Council Hall of the Municipal Building at 5:00 p.m., November 7, 2002.

Members present: Mayor G. Michael Shelton; Councilwoman Mary L. Flood; Councilman Thomas M. Padgett; Councilman C. G. Stanley, Jr.; Councilman W. D. Tharp; and Councilman Robert T. Wandrei.

Members absent: Vice Mayor E. Thomas Messier.

Staff present: City Manager F. Craig Meadows; City Attorney W. W. Berry, IV; and Clerk of the Council Teresa W. Hatcher.

Mayor Shelton called the meeting to order.

The Mayor stated that the Vice Mayor was not in attendance at the meeting due to the death of his sister.

The Clerk of Council read aloud the Notice of Called Meeting, which indicated the following purpose of the meeting: Resolution in Support of Restoration of Services at the Bedford Division of Motor Vehicles.

The City Manager reported that the water situation at the Stoney Creek Reservoir has improved greatly due to the recent rains and requested Council's consensus to remove the water restrictions.

The City Attorney advised that this item be considered at the next regular Council meeting.

The Clerk of Council read aloud the following proposed resolution:

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE
RESTORATION OF SERVICES AT THE BEDFORD DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES
BRANCH OFFICE**

WHEREAS, the Bedford Department of Motor Vehicles office located at 1629 Forest Road has been suddenly closed as part of Governor Mark Warner's budget cuts, which are necessary to address a budget revenue shortfall of approximately \$1.5billion; and

WHEREAS, the closure of the Bedford DMV office is counterproductive in the fact that it incurs additional and unnecessary expenses and inconvenience to businesses, automobile dealerships, and the general public, and will negatively impact the economy of the City of Bedford and Bedford County through an adverse impact on jobs in both the private and public sectors; and

WHEREAS, when taken together, Bedford City and County represent the fastest growing locality west of Richmond with an ever-growing population base, which has created a heavy volume of transactions at the Bedford DMV office and frequently results in long waiting lines during normal office hours; and

WHEREAS, the closing of the Bedford DMV will add greatly to the already heavy workload and crowded

waiting lines in both the Roanoke and Lynchburg DMV offices; and

WHEREAS, demographic statistics reflect that the City of Bedford has a significantly high per capita population of citizens over age 55, which signifies a sizable number of citizens who do not transact DMV business over the Internet, telephone or via the US mail, and this population is strongly affected by the Bedford DMV Office closure and being forced to travel over 60 miles round trip to transact business; and

WHEREAS, the automobile dealers in Bedford have heavily relied upon the local DMV office for their business transactions and customer service, and the 100% elimination of this local office severely impacts their ability to conduct business efficiently, thereby impacting likewise the Commonwealth of Virginia in the timely receipt of cash; and

WHEREAS, at least one Bedford automobile dealer is contemplating the stoppage of a major new \$2 million construction project due to the effect the DMV closure has on the automobile dealers' abilities to transact business and serve customers; and

WHEREAS, the Bedford DMV office is under a state lease until October 2004, during which time the rent is paid regardless of whether the facility remains open or closed, and the reopening of the office on at least a limited or part-time basis will provide immeasurable services and benefits to Bedford City and County and constitute a cost-effective operation for our businesses and citizens; and

WHEREAS, the total closure of this vital DMV office should be reversed to provide a part-time presence at a minimum so that the State action will not have an irrevocable economic impact and create significant inconvenience for the Bedford area; and

WHEREAS, the Bedford area delegation to the Virginia General Assembly, including Interim Speaker of the House Lacey E. Putney, Senator Stephen D. Newman, and Delegate Kathy J. Byron, has called upon Governor Warner to reconsider the decision to fully close the Bedford DMV Office and to reopen it on at least a limited or part-time basis;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia respectfully requests the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Secretary of Transportation, and the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles to reopen the Bedford DMV Office prior to the convening of the 2003 General Assembly session so that at least partial services are provided to Bedford businesses and citizens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Bedford endorses the actions of our General Assembly delegation in addressing this important issue with Governor Warner. The Council calls upon this delegation to commit itself during the 2003 General Assembly session to fully address the problems of the Virginia State Budget to include issues of revenues in addition to expenditures, so that essential State and local services are not severely impacted in Bedford as they have been in this recent DMV office closure; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Bedford calls upon all area businesses, the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce, other similar organizations and all citizens of the City to join together in seeking the reopening of the Bedford DMV Office, and to urge the Governor and the Virginia General Assembly to address the budget of the Commonwealth of Virginia with a clear and reasoned approach for conducting the public's business.

Councilman Padgett moved that the resolution be adopted, the motion was seconded by Councilman Stanley.

Councilman Wandrei suggested that the last sentence in paragraph 12 of the resolution be underlined.

The motion was then voted upon and carried by the following roll call vote:

Councilwoman Flood aye
Vice Mayor Messier absent
Councilman Padgett aye
Councilman Stanley aye
Councilman Tharp aye
Councilman Wandrei aye
Mayor Shelton aye

Mayor Shelton adjourned the meeting at 5:14 p.m.